

On Song of Solomon 8:6

In the soul which is cleaving unto the Lord, and setting Jesus as the seal there, Christ will be uppermost in the affection. The soul will undertake nothing but in his strength, and design nothing but for his glory. And the most blessed testimonies, that the soul is really thus setting Jesus for a seal, will be found in the life and conversation, by the affections being weaned from all things here below, and a growing connection forming more and more, with those that are above. –Robert Hawker

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

II. Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one living and true God, an infinite intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

John 4:24; Ps. 83:18; Heb.3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer.10:10; Ex.15:11; Ps.147:5; Isa.6:3; I Pet.1:15-16; Rev.4:6-8; Mark12:30; Rev.4:11; Matt.10:37; Jer.2:12-13; Matt.28:19; John 15:26; I Cor.12:4-6; I John 5:7; John10:30; John 5:17; John 14:23; John 17:5&10; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor.2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; II Cor.13:14; Rev. 1:4-5.

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Services:

Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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OUR JEALOUS GOD

For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Exodus 34:14

Men often question the actions of God and that with open contempt. We who know Him and love Him may not always understand all that He does or even all that He declares but we do not doubt Him or the infinite wisdom that is His alone. Others err greatly in attempting to associate the actions of God with those of men. In that they know something of the motives of mortal men and lack the knowledge of God they are left with unanswered questions and faulty assumptions. The assumption is made that since it has bad connotations with men, it should not be applied to God. It was in such a manner that the question is raised as to why God would be jealous.

Most have either experienced the jealousies of mankind or have known of it in others. It may have appeared in us or we may have become the object of it. Violence has often erupted with jealousy as the cause. Considered thusly, it is seldom a good thing. It was anticipated in the Law and so the people were given a procedure to deal with jealousy between husbands and wives either with cause or with suspicion of a cause. See Numbers 5. In any case the issue is the competition for or the alienation of affections either perceived or in fact. The question is, is it so with God?

It certainly cannot be a bad thing with God seeing that here it declared to be a name of God and that He is a jealous God. The setting here tells us much. The first tables of the Law had been broken and the resultant revelation of the anger of God against idolatry had been

manifested. Moses had been told to hew two tables of stone like the first. These words were given to Moses during this giving of the Law to him a second time. From this it is clear that the jealousy of God is not to be understood in the terms of petty human emotions; it is the exclusive right of God to claim the unadulterated worship of His people. Their affections and worship were to be directed to none but Him. The basis of the jealousy of God is declared in the first two commandments and so we read: *“Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.”* And *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God...”*

Those who think too highly of themselves are rightly perceived as proud and think themselves worthy of either affections or adoration. Most are repulsed at such thought. When, however, we consider the perfections and matchless beauty of God we who love Him are attracted and rejoice that it is so. It would be foolish to think that God is unaware of His perfection and His glory. It is known to Him, and rightly so, that He merits being loved and adored. It is further to be understood that in the light of all that He has revealed in His design for redemption that He will have that affection and adoration from them. It is an essential element of redemption that He has secured the love and worship of His own. We are made partakers of the divine nature and so enabled to behold Him as He is and so to know of the great love

wherewith, He has loved us. We are loved with an everlasting love and have by lovingkindness been drawn to Him. See Jeremiah 31:3. That being said, we would declare that God is intolerant of any deviation of affections in His people from Him and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

It certainly came to pass in the history of the Israelites that they provoked a reaction in Him. The Psalmist reminds us: *For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. Psalms 78:58.* Joshua had warned the people against idolatry and so declared, *And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. Joshua 24:19.*

The jealousy of God is well known to His prophets and His people. When Elijah was confronted in the wilderness concerning his flight, he answered honestly: *And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. 1 Kings 19:10.* The first part of his answer was true. His jealousy for the glory of God was such that he ordered the slaughter of the prophets of the Baal. The Apostle Paul warned the

Corinthians of their tendency toward idolatry and the potential to provoking the Lord to jealousy. In the Second Epistle to them he expressed personal jealousy in this way: *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:2-3.*

The feeling of jealousy is characterized as being very strong. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Song of Songs 8:6.* Here of course the Shulamite speaks and is expressing the strongest love and desire for the affections of her beloved. The use of the phrase “cruel as the grave” is taken by some to be a bad thing. It is rather describing the unyielding hold that she would enjoy with Him and He with her. Jacob would not yield, and neither would she.

The jealousy of God is a reason for thanksgiving. He has loved and has given assurance of it in the gift of His Son. He has redeemed us for His own and He will have, and merits, the uncompromised and unadulterated affection and worship of the objects of His eternal love and devotion. *bhs*

SPIRITUAL DROWSINESS

“I sleep, but my heart is awake.”
(Song of Solomon 5:2)

The condition here described is the spiritual drowsiness sometimes experienced by Christ’s people. It was experienced by His foremost apostles when they could not watch with Him while He agonized in prayer because their spirit was willing but their flesh was weak (Matthew 26:37-45).

Here are some reasons for and indications of spiritual drowsiness:

1. Neglect of Bible-reading. Would I rather spend time reading man’s words than God’s Word? Are men’s newspapers and magazines and novels daily open before me while the Bible is often a closed book?

2. Neglect of prayer. Would I rather spend time speaking to men than to God? Jesus taught us to pray to our Father daily in our private room (Matthew 6:6-13). But this is not the only time and place in which we may speak to Him. For Jesus also taught “that men always ought to pray” (Luke 18:1; 21:36). We may pray while performing our daily tasks such as cleaning the house or mowing the grass. We should ever be in such a ready state to pray that events throughout the day cause a prayer to spring forth. This was often illustrated in the life of Nehemiah (e.g., 1:1-4; 2:1-4; 4:7-9).

3. Willful absence from worship services. Do I obey the exhortation regarding “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some” (Hebrews 10:25)?

4. Neglect of attention to Christ’s ministers. Would I rather spend time watching and listening to the world’s entertainment than to Christ’s ministers? Christ’s ministers may be heard not only during worship services of His church, but through the books they have written and the many forms of electronic media available to us today (both audio and video).

5. Neglect of hymn-singing. Would I rather sing the world’s songs than godly hymns? And are the hymns I sing truly worthy of the name? Do they praise God and exalt Christ?

6. Lack of Christian fellowship. Do I prefer the company of worldly friends over the company of Christ’s friends? Worldly friends will lull you to spiritual drowsiness. But Christ’s friends help each other stay awake.

7. Neglect of witnessing. Would I rather tell others of my favorite worldly interest(e.g., sports team, hobby, gossip) than of Christ?

It is with good reason that Christians are often exhorted to depart from spiritual drowsiness:

1. Ephesians 5:14: “Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”

2. Romans 13:11: “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.”

3. 1 Corinthians 15:34: “Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.”

4. 1 Thessalonians 5:5-6: “You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.”

– Daniel Parks, Saint Croix, U. S. Virgin Islands

"Free will without God's grace is not free will at all, but is the permanent prisoner and bondslave of evil, since it cannot turn itself to good"

Martin Luther

"...it is certain that all men are untamed till Christ subdues them by the gospel." - John Calvin, Commentary on Isaiah 11.7